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TAGS: [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [EU](#) [BK](#)
SUBJECT: BOSNIA: EU COMMISSIONER REHN SHOCKED BY BIH
PRESIDENCY BEHAVIOR

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Charles English
for reasons 1.4 B, D

11. (C) EU Ambassador Kourkulas briefed Ambassador and High Representative Lajcak on the details of the October 10 meeting of EU Commissioner for Enlargement Ollie Rehn and the Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency. Kourkulas was shocked at the behavior of all of the Presidents, saying it was more like a circus than a serious meeting with country officials. Bosniak member of the Tri-Presidency Haris Silajdzic started the private meeting by demanding that the EU publicly decry the RS Government and its attack on state institutions. Rehn replied that it is important for the Presidents to work together, that Bosnian officials must speak as one voice on the path toward EU accession. He urged the Presidents that time is running out on actions they need to take for accession, that they cannot progress without a census, for example, and must find agreement.

12. (C) Croat member of the presidency Komsic and Serb member Radmanovic followed suit with equally pessimistic prospects on the state of reconciliation in the country. Radmanovic agreed that Rehn's concerns were warranted, claiming the country is not prepared to move toward EU accession. He added that the international community needs to stop giving orders and simply provide advice, noting that the country cannot move forward with the OHR.

13. (SBU) Undaunted by Rehn's response to his comment during the private session, at the press conference following the meeting, Silajdzic repeated his demand to the EU publicly that it condemn those Bosnian officials who are attacking state institutions. Silajdzic compared the EU's failure to place blame on the RS for its anti-state actions to the international community's arms embargo on Bosniaks during the 1992-1995 war. Rehn's public comments were pessimistic, saying that he was "disappointed that recently the country's leaders have been busier with negative rhetoric than taking the country forward to the European Union".

14. (C) Ambassador Kourkulas noted that Rehn was disappointed and surprised by what he considered an about face from his meetings with Bosnian officials in the spring, where they promised him the country would move forward towards EU accession. Kourkulas and HR Lajcak noted, though, that the shock value of the deplorable display by the Presidents - in particular, Silajdzic's biarrely rude behavior in his joint press conferene with Rehn - might serve to wake Brussels up from a lethargic indifference to BiH's deterioration, nd focus attention on the need for early and serous action.
ENGLISH